

HONORING MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT SERGEANT FIRST CLASS LEROY PETRY

(Mr. LUJÁN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LUJÁN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the bravery and valor of Sergeant First Class Leroy Petry of Santa Fe, who will be awarded the Medal of Honor today by President Obama.

As the second living, active duty Medal of Honor recipient for actions in Iraq or Afghanistan, Sergeant Petry's heroism and sacrifice in the face of extreme danger went above and beyond the call of duty.

As an Army Ranger serving in Afghanistan, Sergeant Petry acted without regard for his own personal safety, thinking only of his fellow soldiers when he threw a grenade away from his squad. His selfless actions cost him his right hand yet saved the lives of his brothers in arms.

New Mexico has a long tradition of serving our country during times of war. In World War II, Navajo code talkers contributed to the victory of our Allied Forces. Seventy-one daughters and sons of New Mexico have made the ultimate sacrifice in service during the Afghanistan and Iraq wars.

Now, with his courageous actions in the face of great danger, Sergeant Petry takes his place among his fellow New Mexicans as a true American hero.

RAISING THE DEBT CEILING

(Mr. WELCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, President Reagan is an iconic figure in the Republican Party and revered by many Democrats. He did fight to shrink government and he lowered taxes, but he also raised taxes eight times and he also fought against the absurd notion that America had an option when it came to paying our bills. When the debt ceiling had to be raised, he did it because he knew that was essential, that was our responsibility.

We have got an argument on the other side today that paying our bills is optional. That is dangerous; that is absurd.

There are two arguments the other side is making: One, that it's Obama's problem, despite the fact that they insisted on the Iraq war, the Afghanistan war, going into nation building, tax cuts that we can't afford, Medicare prescription part D. But, second—this is what's really not on the level—every single person who voted for the Ryan budget voted for a budget that will raise the debt from \$14.3 trillion to \$23 trillion. And after voting for that budget, now we will vote against raising the debt ceiling that is required to implement the budget that you voted for.

DEBT LIMIT

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, as negotiations continue on the upcoming debt ceiling, the retirement savings, mortgages, and pensions of the American people hang in the balance.

It is long past time for both sides—I say, for both sides—to get serious about a balanced budget. Any long-term budget must—I state, must—protect Medicare and Social Security for all Americans, create jobs here at home, and begin to reduce the deficit with intelligent class protection.

It's time for the wealthiest among us to step up to the plate and take up their share. We must end tax breaks for ultrarich, Big Oil companies, and the corporations that ship jobs overseas.

No jobs have been created—I state, no jobs have been created—in the United States since the Bush tax cuts first went into effect. No taxes, no jobs. No taxes, no jobs.

Let us put politics aside and do what is best for the interests of the American people before it is too late.

MEDICARE

(Mr. CARNAHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, this image depicts a watershed moment for our Nation's senior citizens. President Harry Truman conceived of Medicare during his Presidency and received first Medicare card after President Johnson signed the program into law 46 years ago, when 40 percent of Americans over the age of 65 lived at or below the poverty level, largely due to medical costs. Now only 10 percent live in poverty.

But my Republican colleagues seek to radically alter this successful program. Their plan would double annual out-of-pocket expenses from \$6,000 to \$12,000, would give insurance companies the power to ration care, and would force seniors to spend another \$2.2 billion on prescription drugs by reopening the doughnut hole.

Madam Speaker, balancing the budget is a national priority. Everyone needs to work together, and everyone has to sacrifice to get our fiscal house in order.

But my Republican colleagues continue to argue for special interest exceptions from that national sacrifice. They are letting oil companies and companies sending jobs overseas off the hook. Why should profitable companies continue receiving taxpayer subsidies while we're asking Grandma to pay more?

Madam Speaker, as Medicare turns 46, let's get serious. Let's be sure that this is a national priority and a national sacrifice.

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REPUBLICANS' RECKLESS BEHAVIOR

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, we have a lot of Americans who engage in very reckless behavior; but generally, that reckless behavior only affects them or maybe their friends or neighbors.

The Republican majority in this Congress is reckless enough that they want to endanger 310 million Americans; reckless enough that they will refuse to pay our debts no matter what kind of a deal is worked out; reckless enough to make us default on the full faith and credit of the United States; reckless enough to raise interest rates on not only our debt, thereby making the deficit worse, but on every American who has a credit card or an adjustable rate mortgage or is borrowing any money; and reckless enough, according to a bipartisan panel that came to this body last week, to take away 10 percent of GDP, costing this country hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of jobs in the month of August alone.

We have a responsibility to the American people to perform for the interests of their lives and this country. And reckless behavior—refusing to raise the debt limit of the United States is about as reckless as you can get. We need to act responsibly.

WE WILL NOT SACRIFICE SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, let me draw your attention to this important chart drafted by the Congressional Budget Office. It shows what the drivers of our debt are.

Now, there's something on here that you see and there's something on here that you won't see. You will see Bush-era tax cuts. This is the orange. You will see the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. That's the red. You will see the economic downturn. That's this blue. This tiny little line here, that's TARP and Fannie and Freddie. And these are the expenses that we paid to try to get our country back on track—the recovery.

What don't you see? You don't see Social Security. Don't let anybody tell you, Madam Speaker, that Social Security is the problem. It's not. Social Security is the promise one generation makes to another so that every senior in America will live in dignity. That's what it's for. That's what it's about. We are not being unreasonable when we demand protection of Social Security. It's not driving the deficit, and it does honor our seniors. And that is what it's all about. That's what we are going to do, and we are not going to give on that.